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# To You

Doretha Michiah Dävé Benn

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## To You

Doretha Michiah Dävé Benn

*This poem is a collection of dedications to poems that did not quite articulate the true feelings of the author. The dedications capture a loss of words and an inability to say the “right thing” to student affairs. This poem speaks to more than just the field of student affairs; it speaks to anyone who is in need of hope. To you.*

To the community that raised me,  
The community that allowed me to be myself,  
The community that continues to embrace me,  
And to you

To those who get lost in the music, the Shondaland fanatics, over-thinkers,  
and optimists,  
To those with bleeding hearts, who find the joy in the small things,  
To the realists, to the procrastinators, proactive, and anyone in between  
And to you

To those suffering in silence and to those whose suffering has been silenced  
To those with insecurities who are struggling to love yourself  
To those who give until they are drained and continue to give  
To those in need of care but are not seen  
And to you

To my friends and colleagues  
To the students who are my heart and the ones that are out of reach  
To the supervisors who shaped me and the ones who broke me  
To the field that inspired me with its capacity to break barriers down  
And to the same one that unceasingly perpetuates systems of oppression  
And to you

You, whoever you are  
This is to you,  
To heal, to breathe, to hope, to see a future—a better future  
To transform spaces, when you have the capacity to do so  
To listen—truly, actively, deeply listen

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*Doretha Michiah Dävé Benn is a second year at the University of Vermont in the Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration masters program who hails from Knoxville, Tennessee. Her mantra for the year is, “But where does your heart feel free? Go there” and she intends to do just that.*

To seek understanding  
To repair harm and forgive  
Please, forgive yourself.  
To learn from the past  
And to know it does not have to be our present or future  
To give grace to others  
and to yourself—you are deserving  
To let our hearts lead us in the direction of love and connection  
To embrace each other as a community, who is deeply hurting  
To again find our purpose, our path, our way  
To rest, refuel, and deconstruct the spaces that drain you  
To recognize that your cause is my cause is our cause

To me  
To you  
To us all  
Dear Student Affairs.